



Marketing News You Can Use

Delaware Department of Agriculture Marketing Section



A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Dear Fellow Farmers and Friends of Agriculture,

The Holiday Season is upon us and it is a time to reflect, renew and rejoice. As with every farm year, 2009 was filled with challenge. Our dairy producers are facing the worst price/cost squeeze since the Great Depression. Yields of most crops were good, although we are now facing an incredibly difficult soybean harvest season due to wet weather. In the future, every agricultural producer in the six-state Chesapeake Bay region will be contending with strategies, programs and practices impacting their farming operation.



Market forces that affect prices have always been a macro-economic force based on supply and demand. The weather is the weather, the result of a wide array of geographical facts of physics and nature that make it too dry, too wet and rarely perfect. Regulations, however, are man-made. Our job at the Delaware Department of Agriculture is to ensure that our agriculture keeps its competitive advantage and can contend and prevail in any marketplace. As the "eco-restoration" strategies aligned with the Chesapeake Bay evolve, please be assured that DDA is working along with other agen-

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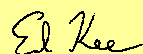
and prevail in any marketplace. As the “eco-restoration” strategies aligned with the Chesapeake Bay evolve, please be assured that DDA is working, along with other agencies and universities, to make sure those Bay programs are fair, effective and balanced.

The future is bright because agriculture is people. Abraham Lincoln said, “Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of and the tree is the real thing.” There is more strong, good character per square foot on our farms and in our food industry than anywhere else. That is why I remain optimistic about our future.

There is a place that confirms all of that and offers a setting to reflect, renew and rejoice. Please take a look at the America’s Heartland website at Americasheartland.org. This weekly series is produced at KVIE-TV in Sacramento and is seen on RFD-TV and PBS stations. It is full of farm and food stories from around our nation. You can view these from the website, including by clicking on Delaware, stories from our state. Please take a look. Soon America’s Heartland can be seen on WHYY-Channel 12 at 10 a.m. Sunday mornings.

Finally, I look forward to seeing all of you during Ag Week at the State Fair Grounds in Harrington from January 18 to 21. Please consider joining us at the Ag Industry Dinner on Thursday, January 21. Ticket information can be obtained at 302-698-4500. Best wishes for a safe, relaxing Holiday Season.

Sincerely,



Ed Kee, Secretary of Agriculture
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(302) 698-4500

**39th Annual Ag
Industry Dinner
Scheduled**

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Holiday Recipe

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FARM FACTS:

According to the Delaware Christmas Tree Growers Association:

- There are an estimated 40-45 tree farms in DE;*

- The tree farms range from one to 100 acres;*

- The most popular Christmas trees in Delaware are the Douglas Fir & the Eastern White Pine.*

Be Loyal...Buy Local! Support Delaware Agriculture Ag Trader /Food Trader Websites a Success

The holiday season is here. And that means gathering together as families and friends to give thanks, celebrate and share a meal. Among the things that we should be thankful for, is that we enjoy one of the most abundant and safest food supplies in the world.

This holiday season, Delaware Gov. Jack Markell and Agriculture Secretary Ed Kee urge you to support Delaware's agricultural industry by purchasing local foods and other local items whenever possible.

"Delaware's agricultural industry is vital to Delaware's economy and more importantly to our quality of life as it provides us with a safe, delicious, nutritious bounty to share at our holiday tables and throughout the year," said Gov. Markell.

Shop Delaware grocery stores, food markets, and other markets for:

- Frozen and canned vegetables from The Pict Sweet Company, Hanover Food Corporation, J.G. Townsends, Inc., and Vlasic Pickles;
- Quality poultry from Allen Family Foods, Inc.,



Meantime on **DEag-trader.org**, the website for posting other agricultural resources that are not food related, there has been just over 7,000 total visits averaging 600-700 visits per month.

There are currently 73 registered members for the site, almost all of whom are producers from Delaware.

According to Joanne Throwe, Associate Director for the Environmental Finance Center and creator of the sites, the plan is to substantially increase the number of consumers to both websites in 2010.

The websites were created in cooperation with the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension and Delaware State University Cooperative Extension.

- Townsends, Inc., and Viable Pickles,
- Quality poultry from Allen Family Foods, Inc., Mountaire Farms and Perdue Farms; and
- Delaware's famous scrapples and sausages from Rapa, Kirby and Holloway, Hughes and Haass.



Since its launch in February 2009, the Delaware on-line Farm Market known as **Defoodtrader.org** has had an estimated 8,000 visits to the website. These visits averaged between 650-850 visits per month with the exception of April 2009 which had 1,451 visits, thanks to the successful marketing efforts by the Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA).

There are currently 90 registered members for the site, including 53 producers and 27 consumers that include two retail and four charities.

Again, check DDA's Food Trader and Ag Trader websites (www.defoodtrader.org and www.deagtrader.org) frequently for available products as the season progresses:

- Local fresh greens, sweet potatoes, herbs, apples, ciders, pumpkins;
- Local fresh turkeys;
- Local fresh/frozen meats (beef, pork, lamb, bison, goat, and emu);
- Locally produced breads and other baked goods;
- Locally produced ice cream and other delectable sweets such as honey, cookies, cakes, pies, candies, etc;
- Locally processed value-added products (sauces, jams, jellies, butters, soaps, candles, gift baskets/bags, etc.);
- Holiday items such as poinsettias, trees, wreaths, cemetery mounds/flowers;
- Gift certificates for local establishments; and
- Local wines, beers, ales, and other spirits from Nassau Valley Vineyards, Pizzadili Winery and Dogfish Head Craft Brewery as they list.

Book the Dates Today!

Who says the month of January has to be cold, stark and depressing with little to nothing to do? Mark your calendars now for two very exciting Ag-related events guaranteed to heat up your winter season.



First up is Delaware Ag Week from Jan 18-23. All major daytime meetings and events will be held at the Harrington fairgrounds, as in the past, with the exception

of two evening dinners. The Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association of DE (FVGAD) will host their dinner at the Harrington Fire Company banquet hall on Jan. 19, while the Ag Industry dinner will take place Jan. 21 at Dover Downs.

Key sessions to plan to attend for vegetable and fruit growers include the Tuesday & Wednesday (Jan 19-20) FVGAD sessions in the Dover Building, and the Direct Marketing session planned for the Exhibit Hall Board Room the morning of Jan. 20. Secretary of Agriculture Ed Kee will deliver

great opportunity for farmers to gain potential new business with many of our state's top retailers, and smaller grocers, as well as cement existing relationships.



Last year this event was very well attended, and it's anticipated that this year's turnout will only increase on both sides of the ball.

If you are a fruit or vegetable grower, or produce a value-added product, and are looking to possibly sell it at a retailer's establishment in 2010, call David Smith, DDA Marketing Specialist at 302-698-4522, to confirm your attendance for Fresh with Care in Delaware 2010.

David can also be emailed at: davidm.smith@state.de.us

Note: the monthly 'Friends of Ag' Breakfast will also be held on Friday, Jan 15 at the Harrington Fire Company location, just to give you yet another networking opportunity!

the Exhibit Hall Board Room the morning of Jan. 20. Secretary of Agriculture Ed Kee will deliver his keynote address on Tuesday morning as part of the FVGAD agenda.

The Delaware Organic Food and Farming Association (DOFFA) will close out Ag Week and hold its annual all day meeting on Saturday, Jan 23. It will be at the Paradee Center, though, not at the fairgrounds. (see flyer at right)

For more information about Ag Week visit their website for a full schedule: <http://www.rec.udel.edu/AgWeek/home.htm>

The very next week the Delaware Department of Agriculture's Marketing team will hold its 2nd Annual Fresh with Care in Delaware summit at the Delaware Agriculture Museum and Village in Dover on Tuesday, January 26, from 10am-2pm.

Invitations were mailed in mid-November to many farmers, retailers and buyers, value-added producers and even restaurant chefs and owners. It's a

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DOFFA Annual Meeting
Saturday, January 23, 2010
U of D Paradee Building
Rt. 113 Dover, DE
9:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M.

 Vermiculture & Vermicompost:
Techniques for Raising Worms and Using the Compost

Funding Opportunities for Organic Producers 

Row Covers, Green Houses, Low & High Tunnels, Cold Frames

 All-Natural Dairy Goat Production

& much more

Our Annual Meeting & workshops are open to the public & take place as part of the AG WEEK celebration. Bring a covered dish to share as we network during lunch. For additional information, contact Stoops@Udel.edu or Lynne Betts at 302-629-3949

www.delawareorganics.com

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Rehoboth Farmers' Market News



Be sure to mark your calendars for Sunday, Dec. 13 when the Rehoboth Beach Farmers' Market reopens for **one** day only for shoppers.

The Holiday Market will be open from noon-3 p.m. during which time some vendors will be back at Grove Park and you can pick up your wreaths and other holiday greens. Hot cider will be available.

Ag Dinner Scheduled



The 39th Annual Agricultural Industry Dinner is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 21, 2010 at 5 p.m. at Dover Downs Hotel & Conference Center.

Tickets for the event, sponsored by The Delaware Council of Farm Organizations, are \$60/each; \$440 for a table of eight.

For more information call 302-644-2471.

Holiday Recipe

Recipe: Roasted Winter Vegetables with Basil Oil



chunks. Cut carrots into-1 1/2-inch lengths. Mix stock with half the oil and half the salt and pepper. In a large mixing bowl, pour mixture over vegetables and toss. Put all vegetables except squash in a large roasting pan greased with olive oil spray. Roast 15 minutes. Add squash and cook 30 to 35 minutes longer, stirring a few times, until nicely browned and easily pierced with a fork. Toss with remaining oil



Ingredients:

3 medium red-skinned potatoes, washed but unpeeled
3 small turnips, peeled
3 medium parsnips, peeled
3 medium carrots, peeled
1-1/2-pound butternut or other winter squash, peeled and seeded
8 to 10 small onions, peeled
1/4 cup chicken or vegetable stock
2 tablespoons basil oil or extra virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Olive oil spray
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried (omit if using basil oil)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cut potatoes, turnips, parsnips and squash into 1 1/4 to 1 1/2-inch square

longer, stirring a few times, until nicely browned and easily pierced with a fork. Toss with remaining oil, salt and pepper. Serves 4.

Seasons:

Turnips and rutabagas are available year round with peak supplies from October through March. Parsnips generally run from fall (usually after the first frost) into spring.

Selection, Handling & Storage:

Turnips: Select small to medium turnips that are heavy for their size (indicating good moisture content), with good color and firmness and no bruises, soft spots or shriveling. They'll last 3 or 4 days.

Rutabagas: Rutabagas should be medium-size, about 4 to 5 inches across. And they should be heavy for their size. The wax on the surface of some is merely applied to prolong shelf life.

Parsnips: Choose parsnips that are firm with a good creamy color and no spots, blemishes, cuts or cracks. They should have a good, uniform shape. Parsnips like cool temperatures. Store them in plastic bags.